Two policemen martyred in Bajaur, Khyber attacks

Dawn Report

BAJAUR: A police official was killed after gunmen attacked him in Lowi Mamund tehsil of Bajaur tribal district on Friday evening.

Police and residents said that policeman Abdur Rasheed was going home to Kitkoot area from duty when he was targeted by armed attackers near Khowaro Kalley locality.

"The 38-year-old official embraced martyrdom on the spot," Israr Khan, a spokesperson for the local police, told *Dawn*.

He said that a team of police personnel of the nearby Lowi Mamund station immediately rushed to the area and launched a search for gunmen, who fled after the attack.

The body was sent to the fallen police official's native village burial after the completion of formalities at the district headquarters hospital in Khar.

No one claimed responsibility for the attack. Also, a policeman was martyred in Khyber tribal district on Friday evening.

Police said that gunmen ambushed a car near Kabarri market in Shah Kas, killing Qayyum Afridi on the spot.

They said that the assailants escaped before a police team reached the area. The police said a search operation was immediately conducted with additional checkpoints established at various entry and exit routes to the area.

Meanwhile, Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam-Fazl leader and administrator of a seminary Maulana Sultan Wazir suffered injuries as a remote-control bomb went off in the Wana area of Lower South Waziristan district on Friday evening.

Police officials said following the explosion in Konra Cheena area of Rustam Bazaar, panic and fear gripped residents.

DPO Tahir Shah Wazir said the remote-control improvised explosive device was planted to target Maulana Sultan.

He said Maulana Sultan sustained serious injuries and was immediately shifted to district headquarters hospital in Wana, where he was provided emergency medical treatment.

Police officials said that the blast occurred when Maulana Sultan Wazir was present outside the seminary.

Police and security forces cordoned off the area, collected evidence and began an investigation.

DHQ Hospital MS Dr Jan Mohammad said the JUI-F leader's condition was critical so he was shifted to the operating theatre for a surgery.

Hospital sources said a team of doctors was making efforts to save Mr Wazir's life.

Terrorist hideouts pounded in Lakki

By Our Correspondent

LAKKI MARWAT: The police on Friday claimed to have destroyed several hideouts of terrorists in the rural areas of Lakki Marwat district.

The operation was launched on the directives of district police officer Nazir Khan, who had received credible information about the presence of wanted terrorists in the region.

The police arrested several terrorists and destroyed their hideouts in Serai Naurang area.

Police said these operations would continue to maintain peace and ensure protection to people's lives and properties in the district.

Meanwhile, a gas valve assembly was damaged in an attack by terrorists in the Bhana Manjiwala area of Lakki Marwat on Thursday night.

A police official said that the incident occurred within the limits of Lakki city police station.

He said that the terrorists opened fire on the gas infrastructure in the rural locality along the Manjiwala link road, damaging it severely.

The official said that terrorists disappeared after the attack.

DRUG addicts participate in physical activity at a rehabilitation centre in Balambat, Lower Dir. — Photo by Haleem Asad

Protesting UoP employees demand placing varsity under Centre's control

Flay KP govt for 'failing' to manage university affairs

By Mohammad Ashfaq

PESHAWAR: The joint action committee of the University of Peshawar's teaching and non-teaching employees on Friday accused the provincial government of failing to efficiently manage the affairs of the leading higher education institution and demanded placing it under the administrative and financial control of the federal government.

The demand was made during a protest against the non-payment of the December salaries and pensions by the university.

The joint action committee, which consists of office-bearers of the Peshawar University Teachers' Association, administrative officers association, Class-IV and Class-III association and sanitation staff, held its general body meeting at the administration block of the university.

The participants at the meeting, which was chaired by Puta president Dr Zakirullah, expressed serious concerns over the non-payment of salaries and monthly pensions for the month of December, according to a statement issued here.

After detailed deliberations on the prevailing issues of the University of Peshawar, the meeting unanimously passed a resolution, which stated that the provincial government had failed to efficiently run the financial and administrative affairs of the university.

Keeping in view the poor administration and ignoring the university, the general body demanded that the administration of the UoP should be reverted to the federal government in the larger interest of the students and masses of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The JAC warned the administration of UoP that if it failed to pay salaries and pension without further delay then they would bring further intensity in their protest. "We will also boycott from the academic and administrative activities of the university for which the university of administration and provincial government would be responsible," reads the resolution unanimously approved by the meeting.

Talking to *Dawn*, Puta president Dr Zakirullah said that it was a joke with the teachers and other employees of the 75 years old university that they have not paid salaries and pension.

He said that employees and their families were perturbed with the frequent delay in their pension and salaries, saying in such a situation, they see the future of the employees as bleak.

Dr Zakirullah said that the provincial government should amend the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Universities Act, 2012, and return the historical university to the federal government in the post-devolution regime as the provincial government was not taking interest to solve the financial problems of the institution.

He said that the cash starved UoP has not paid the pension commutation to its employees who retired in 2024, which was their basic right.

"As per the protest plan, we will go for partial boycott of classes if salaries and pensions are not released within a month. We will close the university if demands are not met after the partial closure of the university," he said.

A senior official of the UoP administration told *Dawn* that non-payment and a delay in payment of salaries and pensions of the university were a constant issue as the university had been facing a Rs1.5 billion fiscal deficit.

He said that the university needed a Rs5.5 billion budget for the fiscal year out of which it arranged Rs4 billion from federal grant, student fee and other resources.

The official said that Rs1.5 billion annual deficit was ballooning with each passing year which has literally paralyzed the university.

"Right now, the university needs Rs2 billion to overcome the financial issues," he said.

He said that the Higher Education Commission was decreasing its grant for the last couple of years in a situation where the university budget was increasing due to annual increase in the employees' salaries.

The official wondered how the university would spend funds on the research and quality of work in a situation when it couldn't pay salaries and pension to its employees.

Balambat rehab centre ray of hope for drug addicts

By Our Correspondent

LOWER DIR: A rehabilitation centre for drug addicts operating in a rented building at Balambat area of Lower Dir has emerged as a last ray of hope for drug abusers and their families, who have urged the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government to provide permanent facilities and financial support to strengthen its services.

Speaking to local journalists in Timergara, relatives of patients undergoing treatment at the centre said dozens of drug addicts were currently enrolled and receiving proper care and supervision. However, they said the centre lacked adequate facilities due to space constraints as it was housed in a rented building.

They urged the provincial government and high ups of the social welfare department to allocate land for a purpose-built facility, establish a computer centre and approve financial assistance for poor patients through Zakat and Baitul Mal funds.

The families pointed out that while some private rehabilitation centres were also operating in the district, their high fees made them unaffordable for low-income households. They said the staff at the government-run centre remained engaged round the clock in the treatment and training of patients, adding that enhanced facilities would significantly improve its performance.

When contacted, Rehabilitation Officer Nisar Ahmad of the Rehabilitation and Detox Unit of the Social Welfare, Special Education and Women Empowerment Department, Lower Dir, said 32 patients from Lower Dir, Upper Dir, Chitral and Bajaur districts were currently admitted to the centre, where both medical treatment and rehabilitation activities were underway.

"Since 2021, more than 2,000 individuals have successfully completed treatment and rehabilitation at the facility," he added.

Nisar Ahmad said the rehabilitation centre, established in 2007, accommodated patients for a 90-day programme. The first 15 days were dedicated to detoxification, followed by medical treatment, psychological counselling and religious guidance.

He said indoor games were regularly arranged for patients, while national days were celebrated throughout the year to promote positive engagement. A psychologist from the Child Protection Unit was available for mental health counselling, while other staff included a religious teacher, a warden, two security guards, a cook, a medical technician, a driver and clerical personnel.

After one month, patients were provided vocational skills training including electrical work and cooking to help them reintegrate into society and lead dignified life after being discharged, he said.

Highlighting financial constraints, the rehabilitation officer said the centre paid Rs70,000 per month in rent, while annual expenses for food and medicines ranged between Rs7 to Rs8 million. He added that although a driver was available, the centre lacked a vehicle and there was also a pressing need for a permanent medical officer and a qualified psychologist.

Kohistan people end protest as officials promise reconstruction of schools

By Our Correspondent

MANSEHRA: People hit by the Dasu hydropower project in Suo tehsil of Upper Kohistan on Friday agreed to end their protest following successful talks with the district administration, which announced the reconstruction of schools and execution of a major water supply scheme in line with the agreements reached upon earlier.

"We have ended our sit-in after successful negotiations with the district administration, which has assured us that all our issues will be taken up with Wapda, the education department, and other relevant authorities for early resolution," Maulana Waliullah Tohidee, local emir of Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam-Fazl, told reporters.

Mr Tohidee led the protesters, while officials of the Dasu hydropower project, Wapda, education, police, and other departments were represented by Upper Kohistan deputy commissioner Khurram Rehman Jadoon during the marathon talks.

"Around 1,000 students have been deprived of education as their schools, located on the land acquired for the dam, were demolished for relocation, but the reconstruction of alternative school buildings has been delayed for several months," Mr Tohidee said.

He added the protesters would approach the Wapda chairman to seek punitive action against officials responsible for the prolonged delay in the reconstruction of high, middle, and primary schools.

Mr Tohidee said an alternative road would also be constructed to connect Suo with the Karakoram Highway, as the existing artery remains blocked during morning and evening hours due to the movement of Chinese engineers and workers between their residential quarters and the dam's work sites.

"Following the successful talks, the execution of the Kamila water supply scheme will be completed within the stipulated period, ensuring uninterrupted potable water supply to households," the JUI-F leader said.

CRACKDOWN: The Upper Kohistan district administration on Friday launched a crackdown on local government employees for drawing salaries without performing their duties.

"The district administration has come to know that there are ghost employees in the local government department, who have been regularly receiving salaries, causing losses to the national exchequer," Upper Kohistan deputy commissioner Khurram Rehman Jadoon told reporters.

He said through various sources, the district administration learned that several local government employees were not performing duties, particularly in the Suo subdivision.

"I have written to the assistant director local government and rural development department to immediately conduct a comprehensive inquiry and submit a report to my office, along with recommendations for action against 30 such employees," Mr Jadoon said.

The deputy commissioner said the district administration would also launch similar crackdowns in the health, education, and other departments, warning that strict legal action would be taken if ghost employees were found.

PBC moves court over formation of PA panel for Radio Pakistan attack probe

Insists PA speaker 'took over' judiciary's domain through notification

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation has petitioned the Peshawar High Court against the formation of a special committee of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly by its speaker for probing the ransacking and torching of the Radio Pakistan building in Peshawar during a protest following the arrest of former prime minister and PTI founder Imran Khan in May 2023.

In the petition filed through its Peshawar station director, Tufail Ahmad, the PBC requested the court to declare illegal the impugned notification issued by KP Assembly Speaker Babar Saleem Swati on Dec 26, 2025, and set it aside.

It also sought interim relief requesting the court to suspend the impugned notification until the final disposal of the petition.

The petitioner, whose counsel is Shabbir Hussain Gigyani, named the provincial assembly speaker and the provincial government through additional chief secretary of the home and tribal affairs department as respondents.

Currently, an anti-terrorism court is conducting the trial in the attack case, with 75 accused, including both current and former lawmakers, being indicted on June 3, 2025, on multiple counts. The accused had pleaded not guilty.

The accused facing trial include provincial minister Meena Khan Afridi, MNA Asif Khan, MPAs Fazal Ilahi Khan and Arbab Waseem, who left PTI and joined PTI-Parliamentarian, and former MPAs Arbab Jehandad, Fida Gul and Wajid Khan.

Last month, the ATC accepted a plea of the PBC and ordered forensic examination of the relevant videos and facial recognition of the accused persons in the case through National Database and Registration Authority (Nadra).

The court had ordered the handover of a USB stick, containing video records, in sealed condition to the investigation officer to ascertain its genuineness vis-a-vis identification of offenders through Nadra records and submit a report before the next hearing on Jan 10, 2026.

In a sitting on Dec 16, 2025, the KP Assembly passed a motion for constituting a special committee for probing the occurrence. The speaker later issued the impugned notification of the 15-member special committee having provincial law minister Aftab Alam as its chairperson.

The ToRs of the committee include the probing and determining the actual incident occurred in Radio Pakistan, Peshawar and May 9 and 10, 2023; finding causes and circumstances of the incident to ascertain whether the incident was due to a well-planned conspiracy, and the role of law-enforcement agencies and their "excesses".

The PBC said that it had headquarters in Islamabad and various units throughout the country, including Radio Pakistan station in Peshawar, the oldest such centre in the country.

It added that on May 10, 2023, the Peshawar building was attacked, ransacked and burned down by "politically charged and motivated" persons, while the FIR of the incident was registered at the cantonment police station.

The PBC said that it was unfortunate that a number of people charged were lawmakers and at helm of affairs, running day-to-day affairs of the provincial government.

It added that it had been actively pursuing its case against the accused though the provincial government, through its resources, was trying its best to damage the interests of the state-owned organisation.

The petitioner said that the assembly's speaker had issued the impugned notification, "upsetting and taking over" the domain reserved for the judiciary as the cases pertaining to different incidents, including the ransacking of the building, had yet to have the final say of the trial court and therefore, the said notification was not only unwarranted but also aimed at disturbing criminal prosecution vis-a-vis judicial proceedings.

It contended that the speaker's move meant for looking into the incident having penal ramifications was unconstitutional and uncalled-for.